

## Argument Against Measure Z

Vote NO on Measure Z—Santa Cruz cannot afford the proposed new beverage tax amid record high increases in cost of living.

Families and mom and pop shops are struggling to make ends meet with grocery prices sky high. This new beverage tax will cause **increases of up to 85% in the price of some everyday beverages**. Everything from iced tea to kombucha to soft drinks will see significant increases; the cost of a case of soft drinks may increase by almost \$6.

Studies show beverage taxes don't improve public health and will do the most harm to families that can least afford it. A UC Davis study found that sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) "taxes in Oakland and San Francisco were both **largely ineffective** in reducing SSB purchases **and regressive** in their incidence. We find **no evidence** that low-income households significantly reduced purchases of SSBs in response to the tax. They, therefore, bore the burden of the tax that was passed forward without improving their health outcomes."

The Santa Cruz proposal offers no guarantee where tax dollars will go. **It says the funds will be used "for general government use."** San Francisco and Oakland also promised to direct the tax money to specific services only to divert it to political pet projects.

If Measure Z passes, the mayor has already said that taxpayers will bear the burden of expensive legal fees. He has made clear that the city will face drawn-out litigation that could cost Santa Cruz huge amounts, **cutting the \$1.3 million the tax is expected to raise**. Supporters of the tax are intent on wasting taxpayer dollars to unnecessarily defy a state law that stopped grocery taxes.

Santa Cruz should spend its resources addressing important issues not trying to tax residents who cannot afford it.

Vote **NO on Measure Z**.

Debbie Bouchard - Owner, DJ's Mini Mart

Miranda Leung - Owner, Canton Westside

Christopher Choi - Owner, M.G. Sushi

Adolfo Hernandez - Owner, Taqueria Jalapeños

Dari Vogel - Owner, Mobo Sushi